

PHOTO OF THE DAY



Last-year students at the school-leaving ceremony of the Fásor Evangelical Secondary School in Budapest

MTI/Szilárd Koszticsák

UPCOMING EVENTS

European Parliament holds plenary session

Parliament meets

Events related to the war in Ukraine

TOP STORY

FM: GOVT TO FIGHT 'PROGRESSIVE POLICIES'

The Hungarian government is ready to fight progressive foreign policy which aims to “annihilate” national foreign policy and to eliminate unanimous decision-making in the European Union’s foreign policy, the foreign minister said.

Nine member states have already set up a group, the “first vanguard of progressive pressurising”, with the express aim of eliminating the principle of unanimity in decision-making in EU foreign policy, Péter Szijjártó told the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) in Budapest on Friday. The initiative was launched by Germany, which vowed to refrain from sending weapons to Ukraine when the war started, but has become an active supplier of cutting-edge heavy weaponry since, he said. Similarly, progressives have pledged that the EU would not impose sanctions on nuclear energy, but now “they are exerting pressure on the European Commission to initiate sanctions against Hungary’s nuclear industry”, he said. “Nobody should expect Hungary to yield to this unpredictable policy.” Hungary’s foreign policy will remain Hungarian, serving solely national interests, he said. Hungary has emerged strengthened from previous crises by ignoring “the dictats of the international liberal mainstream” and holding onto its sovereignty and national interests, Szijjártó said.

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GULYÁS: HUNGARY SITE OF 'SUCCESSFUL CONSERVATIVE EXPERIMENT'

Hungary has seen a "successful conservative experiment" in the past years, Gergely Gulyás, the head of the Prime Minister's Office, said in his closing speech at the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) on Friday. The experiment's success lies in its democratic legitimacy, which was secured in four parliamentary elections won by large margins, Gulyás said. But it is also successful because it has "retained the fundamental values that western parties calling themselves Christian Democrats and conservative have abandoned," he said. On behalf of the Hungarian government, Gulyás thanked the speakers of the event for visiting Hungary "which punches above its weight in the conservative debates". Conservatives in western Europe often accept the "rules and frameworks which leftists and liberals have set them." In the US, however, "conservatives have remained conservative, and protect the fundamental values under attack from wokeism."

That attack "does not happen pro bono", as proven by the fact that the Hungarian opposition had received 4 billion forints in US dollars to rise to power, he said. That funding served the purpose of "making sure that Hungary is not a country governed by a conservative, Christian democratic force that seems to be a thorn in the

current US administration's side," he said. "Wokeism questions the concept of homeland, targets freedom and peoples' right to decide about their own fate, and to define their own values and the frameworks of its life," he said. Gulyás said that the slogan "no woke zone" at the conference entrance was a call for action, and aims to achieve the rise of political forces to power that will declare that their countries "would not become a woke zone". "Forces that see men as men, women as women, and want to protect our fundamental values: nation, faith and cohesion," he said.

AGMIN: RURAL HUNGARY UNDERGONE HUGE DEVELOPMENT SINCE 2010

Thanks to the governance of Fidesz, Hungary's rural areas have undergone progress since 2010 that "everyone should see", Agriculture Minister István Nagy said on Friday, addressing the Conservative Political Action Conference in Budapest. Nagy said the government had to "eliminate the anti-countryside leftist political legacy" which brought a dearth of jobs and resulted in the people moving away from rural areas and farmland falling into the hands of foreigners, and in the "dismantling of the food industry".

After coming to power in 2010, Fidesz "set Hungarian rural areas on a growth path: it adopted one of the strictest land laws in Europe, and protected, and will always protect, the interests of Hungarian farmers," Nagy

said. Strengthening the agriculture and rural areas bring about the prosperity of the whole country, he said. Secure food supply is a matter of strategic and national security, as proven during the coronavirus pandemic and the war in Ukraine, he said. Hungary is currently able to supply twice its population with fresh, safe food, he said. The government is working to establish a society based on a "functional division of labour" between cities and rural areas, he said.

CPAC PANEL DISCUSSION FOCUSES ON MIGRATION, CHALLENGES

A roundtable discussion focusing on challenges posed by migration was held with the participation of European and American experts at the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) in Budapest on Friday. Hosting the discussion, Ernő Schaller-Baross, an MEP of ruling Fidesz, noted the Hungarian government's firm position maintained since 2015 that the borders of Hungary and Europe must be protected and steps must be taken in the migrants' countries of origin and transit. He said that Hungary had faced constant "attacks" from Europe over the fence along its southern border, and Brussels had only reimbursed only some 2 percent of its border protection costs.

Chris Farrell, of the American conservative activist group Judicial Watch, noted heavy migration into the United States. During his presidency,

Donald Trump concluded an agreement with Mexican authorities, enabling migrants to submit asylum applications to the US while they're still in Mexico, he said. The Biden administration put an end to that measure. By now, some 7,700 people are intercepted on the border daily, and some 15,000 cross the border, he said. Daniele Scalea, leader of the think-tank Machiavelli Institute, called for EU treaties to be revised, as they put the rights of migrants ahead of national interests. He proposed jointly adopted, effective and tight controls at the EU's external borders to alleviate the pressure on Italy.

FORMER US ATTORNEY GENERAL: GLOBALISTS AIM TO DESTROY LOCAL CULTURE

The goal of globalists is to crush local culture as they seek to prevent that "we can effectively protect our sovereignty", former US Attorney General Matt Whitaker said, addressing the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) in Budapest on Friday. Globalists do not distinguish between cultures, but want to create a homogenous society, said Whitaker, who served as attorney general in the Trump administration. He said globalists' aim of global economic integration supported the interests of leading multinational companies and NGOs by eliminating national borders, allowing a faster and easier movement of goods and services.

They cannot be allowed to undermine local values through creating a homogenous world order, the environmental protection lobby and by promoting radical gender-neutral radical ideas, Whitaker said. Whitaker highlighted the importance of border protection, arguing that the globalists sought to prevent "us from effectively protecting our sovereignty". "Individual liberty, self-determination, traditional values and family" will save the life of nations, in the United States as in Hungary, he said. Whitaker proposed a new counterculture based on traditional values against the interests "of global corporations and their servants".

PRESIDENT NOVÁK ATTENDS CORONATION OF CHARLES III

President Katalin Novák on Saturday attended the coronation of Charles III of the United Kingdom. She was the first sitting Hungarian president to attend the coronation of a British monarch. Charles was anointed by Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury, in Westminster Abbey on Saturday morning, in front of 2,300 guests.

SZIJJÁRTÓ: HUNGARY, BANGLADESH PART OF PRO-PEACE MAJORITY

Since peace is the only solution to the economic, energy and food crisis triggered by the war in Ukraine, Hungary and Bangladesh are part of the "pro-

peace majority", Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó said in Budapest on Friday. Though Hungary and Bangladesh are far apart geographically, they face the same major challenges because of the war, Szijjártó told a joint press conference with Tipu Munshi, Bangladesh's commerce minister, according to a ministry statement. The triple economic, energy and food supply crisis affects the entire world, and Bangladesh, too, faces serious challenges due to the war and the sanctions imposed in response to it, the minister said. These challenges can only be overcome by achieving peace in Ukraine as soon as possible, Szijjártó said, adding this was another reason why both Hungary and Bangladesh were part of the "global pro-peace majority".

The armed conflict has triggered an energy supply crisis worldwide, meaning that countries that can produce as much of their own energy as possible are the most secure, he said.

Hungary and Bangladesh are building nuclear power plants with the same technology, with a view to ensuring their independence from the price increases on the international energy market and thereby strengthening their sovereignty, Szijjártó said. The two countries have elevated nuclear cooperation to strategic level and have agreed to share with each other their experiences in the construction and operation of their nuclear plants, he said. They have also signed a comprehensive training agreement as part of which 30 Bangladeshi students a year can study

nuclear engineering in Hungary, the minister added.

Nuclear energy is cheap, clean and safe, Szijjártó said, adding that Hungary was committed to building its nuclear plant. Any European attempt aimed at thwarting the Paks upgrade project is seen as “an attack on our sovereignty”, he added. Szijjártó called on the European Commission to approve the modified construction and financing contracts of the Paks project as soon as possible, saying they were fully in line with EU regulations.

Concerning bilateral ties, Szijjártó hailed Hungary and Bangladesh's relations as reliable and predictable. Bilateral trade turnover reached a new record last year, boosted by demand for Hungarian pharmaceuticals and Bangladeshi clothing, he said. Szijjártó said Hungary and Bangladesh had finalised the text of an economic cooperation agreement and had reached a deal on a double taxation avoidance treaty. Meanwhile, he said that a record 1,643 Bangladeshi students had applied for 140 scholarships available to enroll at Hungarian universities this year.

SZIJJÁRTÓ SLAMS PRESSMAN FOR ‘WAR PROPAGANDA’

Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó on Friday slammed David Pressman, the US Ambassador to Hungary, saying he was spreading “war propaganda”, and the US was trying to push Hungary into a war even though the

country was part of a “global pro-peace majority”. Szijjártó spoke at a press conference held jointly with Bangladeshi Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi, responding to a question on Pressman's statement on Thursday, which said: “While we should be focusing on the hot war on our doorstep, others are focused elsewhere on fake ‘wars,’ on culture ‘wars.’”

“Ambassador Pressman said we should be concerned with war... this is also clear from their posters and statements ... But we want nothing to do with that, we want to concern ourselves with peace rather than war,” he said. Regarding Hungary's contract on gas deliveries with Russia, Szijjártó noted that Hungary had weathered “even the hardest energy crises” without having to introduce restrictions. Energy supplies have been and will remain uninterrupted, he said. Energy prices in Hungary are expected to fall in the coming months, he said. “Due to the pricing formula, movements on the international market usually appear in Hungarian prices with a two-month delay,” he said. On changes to the contract on the upgrade of the Paks nuclear plant, he said there were no structural changes in the pipeline which would impact the contractor or the project company. The current amendments are “technical changes accelerating the investment. We expect the European Union to allow the modifications to go through as they are fully compliant with EU regulations,” he said.

ECON DEVELOPMENT MINISTER DISCUSSES ECONOMIC, LABOUR COOPERATION WITH AZERI MINISTERS

Economy Development Minister Márton Nagy visited Azerbaijan on Friday, where he discussed current economic developments with Economy Minister Mikayil Jabbarov. At the talks, Nagy praised the progression of Azeri-Hungarian ties even as the war in Ukraine and EU sanctions “severely harm the global economy by stoking distrust and uncertainty.” Azerbaijan is a strategic partner of Hungary, with bilateral trade at nearly 50 million dollars annually, he said.

Azerbaijan is also an important partner in ensuring energy security and sovereignty in Hungary, and part of the Solidarity Ring initiative designed to transport energy to southern and eastern Europe from Central Asia, he added.

Nagy also signed a labour action plan with Sahil Babayev, the Minister of Labour and Social Protection of Population. The action plan aims to strengthen labour policy cooperation and sharing of best practices and experiences, he said.

GOVT OFFICIAL: DEBATE OVER EU FUNDS ON ‘POLITICAL BLACKMAIL, NOT RULE OF LAW’

The debate over the disbursement of European Union funding is about political pressure and blackmail

rather than the state of the rule of law in Hungary, state secretary Csaba Dömötör told public radio on Sunday. Dömötör told Kossuth Rádió that MEP Daniel Freund, a member of the Committee on Budgetary Control, had said that Hungary would not receive EU funding unless it abandoned its stance on the war in Ukraine, migration and child protection. However, Hungarians have the right to decide whether they want to send weapons to Ukraine, who they want to allow into the country and how they want to protect their children, he said. Dömötör also called for a “change of direction” in European Union leadership in next year’s EP elections, insisting that the current one did not represent European citizens’ expectations.

SZIJJÁRTÓ: S KOREAN BATTERY PARTS MANUFACTURER TO EXPAND PLANT IN C HUNGARY

Countries drawing investments of electric car manufacturers will be the

“winners” of the new economic world order, Peter Szijjártó, the minister of foreign affairs and trade, said on Friday. Announcing the expansion of a plant of South Korean Sang-A Frontec, which manufactures plastic parts for electric car batteries, Szijjártó said South Korean companies are the fourth largest group of investors in Hungary. Bilateral trade jumped by 37% last year to nearly 7 billion dollars, he said. The 10 billion forint (EUR 26.7m) investment in Szada, near Budapest, has received a 1.4 billion forints in government grant, and will create 55 jobs, he said.

RECYCLING COMPANY INAUGURATES PE TUBING MACHINERY

Recycling company Green Technológia inaugurated a 250 million forint (EUR 668,000) machine manufacturing irrigation tubing using recycled plastic in Lébény, in north-western Hungary, on Friday. Speaking at the ceremony, Agriculture Minister István Nagy noted that a network of a hundred

collection sites for old greenhouse film was set up with government support in 2021. The next step will be to install agglomerator machines next to the collection sites so the finished agglomerate will only need to be transported to the product processing sites, the minister said. Managing director Lajos Nagy said the equipment has capacity to make 50kms of polyethylene tubing per day. Green Technológia had revenue of 538 million forints in 2021, public records show.

MORE THAN 13,000 REFUGEES ENTER HUNGARY ON SATURDAY

Fully 5,807 refugees entered Hungary at the Ukraine-Hungary border on Saturday, while 7,417 came to the country via Romania, according to the national police headquarters (ORFK). Police issued temporary residence permits valid for 30 days to 68 people, ORFK said on Sunday. Budapest received 81 people, 27 children among them, by train.